

PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTONA NEW SPECIES OF FRANCOLIN FROM SOUTHERN  
ABYSSINIA.

BY H. B. CONOVER.

The recent Harold White-John Coats Field Museum Abyssinian Expedition brought to the Field Museum a small collection of birds from Abyssinia. Among these was one specimen of a Francolin which has proved to belong to a new species. It is very different from any previously described, but probably is most closely related to *Francolinus castaneicollis*. However, it is a very plain colored bird, lacking the rufous markings of that species.

I have been given the opportunity of describing this species through the kindness of the Director of the Field Museum and the members of its zoological staff.

According to the collector, C. J. Albrecht, the bird was taken at Mega, which is an isolated forested mountain about 7000 feet high; and subject at the time of their visit to heavy mists. The trees were said to be moss grown, indicating moist conditions, although the surrounding region is not very well watered.

***Francolinus atrifrons*, spec. nov.**

*Type* from Mega, Boran, Abyssinia, el. 7000' (about 70 miles northwest of Moyale, Kenya Colony) No. 67455, adult male in the collection of Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, collected May 31, 1929, by C. J. Albrecht.

*Characters*.—A large double-spurred Francolin with red legs and bill. Probably most nearly allied to *Francolinus castaneicollis*, but without any trace of the rufous markings; a very plain colored bird.

*Description*.—Forehead and superciliary stripe black. Top of the head dull brown, the feathers with slightly paler edges. Feathers of the back and sides of the neck dull brown, widely bordered with brownish white. Mantle and upper back fuscous black, each feather with 2 whitish V-shaped

markings, one submarginal and the other subcentral, the latter more strongly tinged with buffy. Wing coverts hair brown, speckled with black and with whitish markings as on the mantle. Lower back, rump and upper tail coverts olivaceous brown mottled with fuscous black and with narrow shaft lines of the same color. The feathers edged with dingy white, these becoming obsolete on the upper tail coverts. Central tail feathers dark buffy brown, vermiculated with dusky and with narrow dusky shaft streaks. Outer tail feathers dusky brown, vermiculated on the outer web with buffy. Primaries hair brown, the outer ones indistinctly edged with ashy gray. Secondaries brown, the outermost with a submarginal stripe of dull whitish and a few irregular freckles of the same color, the latter increasing in amount toward the innermost secondaries, where they form a second parallel stripe. A narrow line of black along the upper edge of the gape. Lores and cheeks buffy white, each feather with a black tip giving a speckled appearance. Auriculars dull brown. Feathers in front, underneath and behind the auriculars slightly tinged with rusty. Throat pale vinaceous buff. Feathers of the foreneck the same with conspicuous V-shaped centers of dull brown. Lower neck and upper breast similar but with central markings becoming obsolete or at least not sharply defined, giving the feathers a slightly brownish appearance. Remainder of underparts the color of the throat. Under tail coverts with dark brown shaft stripes. Flanks with dusky shaft stripes and vermiculations. Outer side of the thighs dark brown. Wing lining uniform brown. Bill and feet red. Wing (flat) 206, tail 128, culmen (exposed) 30, tarsus 58, middle toe (with claw) 58 mm.

All specimens examined are in the Field Museum, Chicago.

*Specimens examined:*

*Francolinus castaneicollis bottegi*.—Abyssinia: Mt. Albasso 5 ♂, 6 ♀; Mt.

Kaka 3 ♂, 3 ♀; Arbigona Village 1 ♂, 1 ♀; Webbi River 1 ♀.

*Francolinus atrifrons*.—Abyssinia: Mega 1 ♂.